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Pima government group earns national kudos

By Andrea Kelly

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The Pima Association of Governments won several awards in the past month for transportation and communications-related work.

The association, which includes representatives from all the local governments in Pima County: the county itself; the cities of Tucson and South Tucson; the towns of Oro Valley, Marana and Sahuarita; the Tohono O'odham Nation; and the Pascua Yaqui Tribe.

PAG received a gold award in the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's Best Workplaces for Commuters Race to Excellence. The Race to Excellence is a national competition for organizations that offer commuter benefits and alternative transportation choices. This year, 55 winners were named in the Race to Excellence in the program, but only seven, including PAG, won a gold distinction.

Mary Ann Soto, employer representative in PAG's travel reduction program, helps employers qualify for the Best Workplaces for Commuters designation and leads PAG's efforts.

Gayle Johnson, also an employer representative in PAG's travel reduction program, led PAG's regional Vanpool Incentive Program and earned a merit award from the Indian Health Service. The award will be presented during a ceremony on July 14.

Johnson was recognized for her vanpool program, which uses nine vans to transport people to and from Sells, thus eliminating 81 cars from the roads, according to PAG.

PAG also received three Cactus Quill Merit Awards from the International Association of Business Communicators-Tucson.

These merit awards honor excellence in business communications and cite PAG's quarterly Regional Outlook publication and its internal employee newsletter InterAction.

Also honored was a PAG brochure that included profiles of all the members of the Regional Transportation Authority's Citizens Advisory Committee. That group helped draft the 20-year,

\$2.1 billion regional transportation plan and the half-cent sales tax to fund it.

● *Contact reporter Andrea Kelly at 573-4243 or akelly@azstarnet.com.*

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